

Pst. Oghenethoja Umuteme MSc MDiv ThD

Fruitful Vine



A Study Devotional

**Not for
Sale**



Spending Time with God

Time	Description	Action
5:00am - 5:30am	Praising His awesomeness in the cool of the morning breeze and Dedicating of the day's activity. You may decide to do it outside to feel the cool morning breeze	Prayer/Praise
9:00am-9:05am	Read a Psalm of praise back to Him. Tell Him what you feel for Him in adoration and total submission	Praise
12:00noon - 12:30pm	It is noontime – half of the workday is gone. Tell Him thank you for allowing you cross over to the other half of the workday. Thank Him for all that transpired while you worked	Prayer/Praise
4:00pm- 4:05pm	Read another Psalms of Praise	Praise
6:00pm - 6:30pm	Thank Him for the day. You are probably now at home. Call the family together or a neighbour and worship Him together	Prayer/Praise
9:00pm - 9:05pm	Read a Psalms of praise after which you should take a rest while reading your bible and meditating	Praise
11:55pm - 12:30am	Thank Him for allowing you to see a new day and take control of the new day	Prayer/Praise

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ISBN: 978-179-658-957-3

Imprint: Independently Published by Restoration Media House

Unless otherwise indicated, Bible quotations are taken from the King James Version and New King James Version of the Holy Bible. Scripture quotations marked with ESV are taken from the Holy Bible, English Standard Version.

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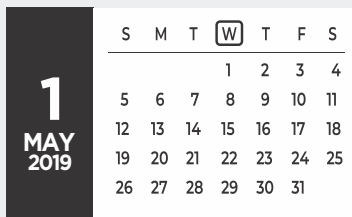
Tojoja

Preface

We have celebrated Easter with the thinking of Christ as the redemption for the sins of humanity; given by God for the salvation of our souls. Now, we are in the month of May. The year is coming gradually to an end. So also, our days on earth. The thought of departing this world someday is the more reason why our time with the Lord, doing His bidding for our souls, should encourage us in preaching the Gospel. Let us not be carried away by frivolous intentions. The world is so beautiful that if we want to see all that God has created, we won't have time to think about ourselves. God created us to be reasonable and committed to our calling in His will. This month of May is also the month in Nigeria when children are celebrated. It is also a month that Nigeria will witness the beginning of another four years of democratic rule. Therefore, this month is very important to every Christian. First, we must commit our younger generation into the everlasting will of God, that they be found worthy to take the baton of leadership in their time to lead the world to God. Second, we must pray that whoever God has allowed to sit on the seat of leadership must lead with the mind of God. Third, we must wake up ahead of all those seeking to lead this nation, and by the authority of God, guide them from the spiritual, to rule with the fear of God. As usual, this month promises to be thought provoking, with the intention of drawing the reader closer to the will and mind of God. We shall be discussing every topic through explanations that are both biblically and theologically sound. Theology is the quest to know God through His acts in the Bible. Divinity is the immortalisation of God through the ordinances of worship and service that we perform towards Him in His name. I am certain that our study this month will encourage us to perform the duty of divinity more explicitly. I wish you a wonderful encounter with the divine this month. Shalom!

Pastor Oghenethoja Umuteme

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Th.D. (Theology); PhD (Engrg – in view)



What Influences our Thoughts

Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. Ephesians 3:20



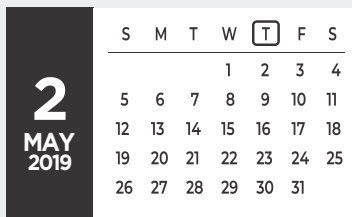
Thinking requires our entire mind, heart, and soul. This represents our whole attention; and God requires them before you can say you love Him. Hence, our thoughts can affect our cordial relationship with God. The way we think is connected with the knowledge residing in us. In the spiritual sense, our thoughts are equally related to the measure of the faith in us. We must understand that various factors affect how we perceive events around us, and that this perception of the world around us is what affects the way we think, and the behaviour we display towards events. In the anchor verse quoted above, we are made to understand that our thinking is affected by the level of the power that works in us. This power to ask or think rightly can be influenced by what we have accepted as the norm in society. For instance, if we believe that people have the right to do anything to bring food on their table, this will become a way of life. Humanity have lived in cultures and customs that, in some cases, negates the values of heaven. In recent times, society now debates the values of God in the Bible. Is it possible for mankind to influence the thoughts of God towards His creations? Can we tell God what we want outside His will? Can we force God to do that which will not give Him glory? I have heard a popular saying that the "voice of the people is the voice of God." What an erroneous assertion! How can humanity dictate the pace of events on earth without the approval of God? You see, our thoughts are being corrupted daily by

societal demands and pressures – but as a child of destiny, you cannot give in. Human thinking can never be the thinking of God, except we have the mind of Christ (1 Cor. 2:16). In which case, we only think about what God want us to think. Crafting sermons that pleases humans so as to increase church membership, will only cause more damages to our society. The word of God is never archaic. Scripture says in Isaiah 55:8, "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." Did we read that? Yes! His thoughts can never be influenced by our thoughts. The world belongs to God, and anybody who wants to think productively, must be in tune with the power of God, which makes all things perfect on earth. We cannot decide for Him; to obey is better than sacrifice!

Faith confession: I understand that whatsoever I do involve seeking the face of God for a direction - that my asking, thinking, and receiving answers is a measure of the knowledge and faith that reside in me.

Let us pray: Lord, by your infinite mercy, help me to think along your will for my entire stay here on earth. Let me not be controlled by societal pressure to do the things that offend you. Amen!

Meditation: 1 Samuel 15:22-23;
1 Thessalonians 5:1-22



Thinking Through the Situation

Think over what I say; for the Lord will give you understanding in everything. 2 Timothy 2:7 (ESV)



How is your mind working right now? The easiest way to know that our minds are working is when we think. Now, we have both shallow thinking and deep thinking. The difference in the two is in the results that each of them yields. This is why scripture cautions in 1 Corinthians 8:2-3, "And if any man think that he knoweth any thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know. But if any man love God, the same is known of him." Why? The answer is found in the anchor verse above, "...the Lord will give you understanding in everything. Hence, for children of God, the Lord gives them understanding in every situation. They know why things are the way they are (Isaiah 42:9), even in academics! I am not happy when students say they fail exams because they were busy with the gospel of Christ on campus. Such saying only proves the level of ignorance that many have towards the person of God. I pursue various studies in life, because I am certain the Lord will give me understanding when I read. Now, a shallow thinker forgets things easily while a deep thinker does not. The shallow thinker is also called passive thinker, while a deep thinker is also called an active thinker. Deep thinkers store their thoughts in their hearts while shallow thinkers are more concerned with perishable things – foods, clothing, etc. Most importantly, deep thinkers are result oriented people and they think for posterity. They ensure every second of their time is spent

wisely. You would hardly see them making worthless phone calls. They browse the internet when they seek important information. Nothing is funny to them., because they make sense out of every funny or senseless situation. They are the leaders and movers of society. They hardly complain, even when they are dying. They see every situation as spiritually motivated, and they will go spiritual to unravel what is behind every stagnant situation in their lives. Deep thinkers seek knowledge from God, while shallow thinkers seek solutions from the material world. Deep thinkers meditate, while shallow thinkers forget easily so there is nothing to meditate upon. Are you willing to think through that situation with the mind of God in Ezekiel 36:36? Then, you can change that ugly situation henceforth.

Faith confession: I understand that those who succeed are those with the mind of restoration; who wait on the Lord, and willing to think through the situation by the reasoning of God.

Let us pray: Lord! give me the patience to think through every situation I found myself. Let my heart depend on you in every decision I make. Safeguard my mind from worldliness. Amen!

Meditation: Exo. 31:1-6; 1 John 4:4-6; Psalms 111:10

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Essence of the Human Mind

*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God:
for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.
So, then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Rom. 8:7-8*



To start with, we need to understand what defines a mind that dwells in carnality, and how this affects our love for God. This we will do first, by understanding the statement of Jesus in Matthew 22:37-38: "And he said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the great and first commandment." Why did Jesus mention "mind" as one of the receptive layers of spiritual consciousness? The link between the human soul and the mind must be understood in this matter of spiritual awakening. The human mind receives spiritual gazettes that informs us of the intentions of God from the human soul and also transmits our spiritual and material intentions, as impulses, to the human soul. So, our souls stand in the midway between our mind and the spiritual realm. The human mind is also in direct communication with the human senses. The human mind is affected by the conditions and situations in our environment. Hence, we are advised to abstain from every appearance of evil – 1 Thess. 5:22, as these will blur our perception of reality – physically and spiritually, since our minds can be manipulated to decide otherwise against the will of God. The messages generated or received by the mind either from the human soul (subconscious state) or the human senses (conscious state) are from our thoughts. These are transmitted by the human soul into a particular spiritual

circle of influence, which we had subscribed to in our subconscious state as a result of our spiritual inclination and material desires. The human mind controls our daily living here on earth. It is the home of human contemplations and intelligence. We are what our mind says and become what our minds appreciates. Our minds can be apprehended by the thoughts of others, as we begin to see reason with their opinion. This is why the Bible cautions that evil communication can corrupt good manners – Matt. 5:37; 1 Cor. 15:33. The values of our upbringing are stored in our minds. Double mindedness is the result of contemplative convictions from the unholy opinions we get from others, which can make us become unstable in all our ways – James 1:8. By this, we kill trust and our steadfast relationship with God.

Faith confession: I understand that my mind can be manipulated by the thoughts and physical actions of others. Henceforth, I will be careful about how I interact and associate with others.

Let us pray: Lord! Let my mind be fixed on your cross. Help me to have a firm mind that can not be manipulated to commit evil against your will by the show of wealth from unbelievers. Amen!

Meditation: Prov. 24:19-22; Psalms 73:2-3

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Follow to Receive

When I remember these things, I pour out my soul in me: for I had gone with the multitude, I went with them to the house of God, with the voice of joy and praise, with a multitude that kept holyday: Psalms 42:4



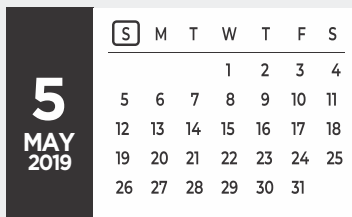
In the anchor verse above, King David showed us the secret to his successes and announcement in life, as one with the heart of God. David's love for God and all that concerns God in the sanctuary can be attested to in the blessings of God upon his life. God showed him His marvellous kindness – Psalms 31:21. God never turned away his prayers – all he ever prayed for were answered because the mercy of God was with him – Psalms 66:20. How did David grow in the wisdom and righteousness of God? We can have a glimpse into his desire in Psalms 119:12, “Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statutes.” His willingness to know more about God earned him the love and blessings of God. To David, nothing else matters because God was his portion – Psalms 119:57. He earnestly waited on the blessings from God and not depending on the promises from man – Psalms 106:4. He realised that when God was angry with him, that was the only time he experienced trouble – Psalms 30:7. So, what did he do to intensify his commitment to God? He cried unto him – Psalms 30:8. What happened after he cried wholeheartedly unto God? His prayers were heard, and God turned his mourning into dancing – Psalms 30:11. How did David knew that God can bless him? Indeed, he was so sure that the Lord “hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant” – Psalms 35:27. What did he promised to do to

appreciate the kindness of God in his life? Hear him in Psalms 35:28, “And my tongue shall speak of thy righteousness and of thy praise all the day long.” Jesus cautioned in Luke 6:39, “...Can the blind lead the blind? shall they not both fall into the ditch?” You see, we can only be led into spiritual awareness and maturity and be rewarded with joy when we follow those who pleased God and were blessed by Him. Hence, instead of sitting and bemoaning our woes, why don't we make up our mind and follow the footsteps of people who served God in righteousness. David did make some mistakes like we do today, but he realised himself and held on to the source of his salvation and redemption. It is time to arise and do the needful in Christ.

Faith confession: I am determined to follow after the footstep of the Lord and all those who served God wholeheartedly, so as to please God and obtain His love and compassion.

Let us pray: Gracious and omnipotent God. Wisdom and power belong to you. Help my spirit to follow the path that you have destined for me without wavering. Amen!

Meditation: Isa. 60:1-2; Acts 22: 16; Romans 6:15-19; Prov. 4:23-27



Building Faith = Holding Fast

*...blessed are they that hear the word of
God, and keep it. Luke 11:28*



How do we build faith and hold fast that which the Lord has commanded that we should observe? In the anchor verse above, we read of Jesus' response to a statement made by a woman after hearing the wisdom of Jesus. In one of Jesus' teachings he explained the journey of the evil spirit once cast out of a man and returning to take possession with seven more wicked spirits when he found no faith in the man, and that the later part of the man's life will be worse than the first. The woman wanted to give the glory of God to Mary the mother of Jesus, when she said – "...Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps (milk) which thou hast sucked" – Luke 11:27. The above affirmation is that glory and honour belong to God alone and the blessings are for all those who keep His word. Mary kept the word of God through angel Gabriel and the fruit of salvation came through her. John the Baptist commenced baptism in wait for the coming of Jesus. His disciples propagated the word to the universe. We continue by keeping faith alive in the hearts of men by our continual preaching of the gospel. But, it is totally wrong to see Mary as the mother of God, as observed by Catholics. Even, this month of May is a special month of devotion to Mary in the Catholic Church. Such devotions take attention from God and His purpose for mankind. Seeing Mary as the mother of God is one strong area of contention between Islamic religion and Christians. Though, not

all Christians accept the position of Catholic church in this regard, yet Muslims see every Christian with the eye of the Roman Catholic Church and her unending lists of dogmas. In Daniel 3:17, the three faithful young men only trusted in God and not on the prayers of departed souls for their freedom. How can Mary pray for us before Christ or God, when Christ says that our salvation is in keeping the word of God? How can we rely on receiving faith through the prayers of departed saints, when the saints wanted the church to pray for them when alive? – 2 Thess. 3:1. I will always stick to the instructions of Christ – for there lies the breath of life. Proverb 4:13 says, "Take fast hold of instruction..." Job held on to righteousness – Job 27:6. Those who backslide in their service to God are those who hold on to deceptions – Jer.8:5.

Faith confession: I am eager to continue in this race of purity and sanctity. I am willing to observe the instructions of the Lord, and not to follow church tradition against the truth in Christ for my soul.

Let us pray: Ever faithful God, I know that your blessings are for those who keep your word. Help me through Jesus Christ, to live and keep your word in my heart all the days of my life. Amen!

Meditation: Hebrews 10:19-31; Revelations 3:3-6; 2 Timothy 1:13-14

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Running with Focus on Jesus

*...let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto
Jesus the author and finisher of our faith... Hebrews 12:1-2*



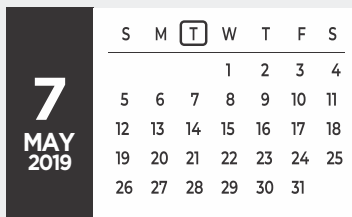
In the last devotional topic, we discussed how we can build faith in Christ. Today, our concern is how we can keep Christ in focus. We would be learning from the three wise men in the book of Matthew 2:10, who saw the star that led them to where Jesus was born and rejoiced greatly. Their earnest search for where Jesus was born as the star led them is worth taking learning from. If they, who were yet to receive salvation could rejoice this much, how much more should those of us who have become heirs of the Kingdom of God through Christ. Don't forget that until Jesus ministry started, the kingdom of God was a mere wish for mankind. Before Christ, all that existed were shadows as mankind in every culture tried to create images which they bowed to, as a means of communicating with the spiritual realm with no result as sin and death took hold on them. Even, the children of Israel were not too sure they were serving the Lord, hence they kept living a life of idolatry. But, Christ has established the Kingdom of God here on earth, so that we can become heirs of God through Christ, if we would believe in Him, follow Him and Look unto Him daily. How can we keep looking unto Jesus? We must give up on material chase that will endanger our souls, such as stealing, cheating, oppressing widows and less privileged in society, etc., and follow the will of God - Mat. 16:24-26. It is equally a demand on us to repent in and out, to become the desire of God when He come visiting His vineyard - Mat. 22:11-14. Our

concern is how to become clean from blemishes of profane words by sticking only to the words spoken by the Lord - John 15:1-3. We must strengthen our faith by continually expecting the reward of the Lord for those who serve Him faithfully - Rev. 2:17,26-28. It was the desire of the Lord that we earn a place where He is with the Father - John 12:32; 17:2. Those who sacrifice to do the bidding of God in Christ, in reconciling the world back to Him, are enabled spiritually to see the Lord from time to time - John 16:16. Just as He was in vision with the Father while on Earth (John 8:38; John 10:30), so we ought to be in vision with Him, seeing the same things He sees with the eyes that He will give to us (John 17:21). We can see that once we are in Christ, we are also united with God in thought through the Holy Spirit of God - John 16:14-15. We need His guide daily - Mat. 11:29.

Faith confession: I understand that I need to keep learning from the Lord, so that I can be in tune with the mind of God in heaven. The more I am ready to learn, the more he reveals himself to me.

Let us pray: Lord! help me to keep you in focus, so that I can keep learning from you. Teach me to follow the path of spiritual purity by your Holy Ghost. Strengthen my inner mind to serve you. Amen!

Meditation: Hebrews 10:35-39; Jude 1:21; Luke 9:62



Overcoming Low-Life Syndrome

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, ... Eph. 2:1-2



The Cambridge English dictionary defined “low-life” as “a person who exists by criminal activities or has a way of life that most people disapprove of.” It is true that many of us lived a life of unmentionable sins and atrocities before we came to Christ. But, we must realise that once in Christ, and have received His name upon our head, we are expected to turn a new leaf, and live a life that glorify Him. Peter told Jesus he was a sinner and not qualified to be with Jesus (Luke 5:8), but Jesus recruited him as one of His apostles, who later became their leader. Despite Jesus' preference of Peter as the leader of his sheep, He was still not comfortable with the position of John as one loved by the Lord – John 21:20-22. Why was Peter so bothered about John, instead of facing His calling in the Lord? Sometimes we bother so much about others that we end up unable to fulfil our own call in the Lord. Satan know how to distract you. That sister dressing nude around you might be planted by the devil to derail you from your call of sanctity. A man that goes after nudity lacks integrity. Moses complained too that he was not qualified – Exo. 4:10. Apostle Paul complained that he was the least of the apostles – 1 Cor. 15:9. Why all these complaints? He that calls knows how to equip. The moment we yield our lives under the control of Christ, we ought to also forget everything that connected us to the low-life we lived before we knew Christ, including our

worldly clothing and associations. A low-life living is connected with a low-life appearance. If we have received forgiveness, why are we trying to dress and put up appearances that shows we are still in bondage. A prostitute, for instance, dresses to attract her customers, why should a saved daughter of Zion dress whorishly with the excuse of enticing her husband in public? It all boils down to the feeling of low-life. It is a feeling of “I am not worthy to be desired by my husband.” It is the reason many prefer to only associate with those they are better than. I have noticed many finding it difficult to associate with genuinely repented successful people, because they feel very inferior before them. Put on the boldness of a saved child of God from today and overcome every spirit of low-life syndrome that creates inferiority in you.

Faith confession: I promise to change my outward appearance to reflect the new life I now have in Christ. I am willing to abandon every element of low-life still remaining in my life.

Let us pray: Lord! help me to appreciate your person in me. Help me to stop condemning myself and feeling that I am not forgiven. Let me be bold to live the new life you have given me. Amen!

Meditation: Ephesians 2:1-10; Luke 7:37-50

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The Place of the Blessed

And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also. John 14:3

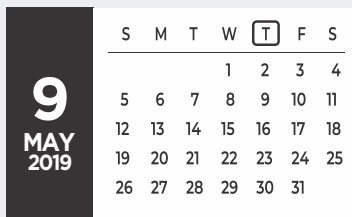
The night that Jesus was arrested, He reiterated the promise of heaven upon mankind through His death by taking us to the place of the "Blessed," that he promised in the anchor verse. The fact is that we have received the mercy of the "Blessed," who Himself is the source of power, surrounded by the clouds (Mark 14:61-62). Life emanates from the "Blessed." Hence, Christ explained that the words from Him were capable of giving light and life to anyone that receives it - John 6:63. What does this imply? It means that those who have known the Lord are privileged to have heard the Blessed one speak, as the Israelites heard Him - Deut. 5:24. To be in tune with the Blessed one, Ezekiel was advised to, "...receive in thine heart, and hear with thine ears" - Ezk. 3:10. You see, we must be totally focused to be connected to the spiritual through Christ. If this being the case, where is the time for all the entertainments, comedy, and immodest dressing in the Church? So, if we did pray in His name, and we received of God through Him that is exalted above every other name, then we have partaken of the Passover meal of the Lord. It indicates further, that we are a chosen generation, with a peculiar calling - out of the world, and we should desire to be filled with the sincere milk of the Lord. Our rejoicing is tied to the cross. We must realise that our place in God can only be achieved by being mindful of the perfection of Grace obtained at the cross. Through the cross, our flesh is crucified, and

our spirit is lifted unto His blessed peace and glory. This is the reason why in James 1:9, the poor are encouraged thus, "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted." The chase of riches can hurt the exaltation of the spirit of man (Eccl. 5:13; James 1:10-11). When our spirit being is not lifted to the place of the "Blessed," we find it difficult to experience the peace of the Lord. Once we receive the gospel, we must bear fruits by winning souls, else we hurt Him the more. This is because the gospel (the kingdom of God), which we received is likened to a palm fruit which have fallen around the tree and will sooner loose its beauty and attractiveness when it dries. We must not allow the gospel to dry on us. We are the ones to make the gospel refreshed in the eyes of others through our lives.

Faith confession: Lord! I am determined to seek your abode. I want to be where you are, from where my soul is refreshed and nourished in the consciousness by the spirit of the "Blessed."

Let us pray: O! Son of the Blessed, let my spirit be exalted by the horn of your salvation. Help my soul to depend on the everlasting streams of life flowing from your bowels. Amen!

Meditation: Deut. 5:22-29; Exo. 24:16-18; Philippians. 3:20-21



A Sign of Heaven on Earth

*And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet,
and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds,
from one end of heaven to the other. Mat. 24:31*



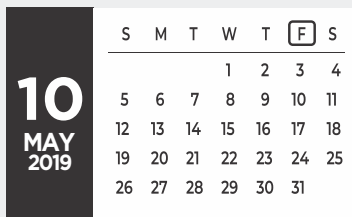
It was in a night vision on 4th January 2019, at about 6:25am, I saw the most vivid imagery of the homes prepared for the faithful in Christ cast upon earth. It shows that the earth will soon be taken over by the Lord. In the vision I saw that the hills and mountains had disappeared. The beautiful houses of men had turned to heaps of sand. Then, everywhere became a city – with houses of similar designs, and fanciful and the expensive houses of the rich were all gone. Why did the Lord reveal such imagery to us? It is to keep the faithful working to earn His reward and glory, and to deter sinners from dwelling in the well of atrocities and iniquities. As reiterated by the Psalmist in Psalms 73:25, “Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.” We can enjoy the peace and glamour of beauty of heaven on earth when we make the Lord our utmost desire. Jesus informed us that heaven will take over the earth – Mat. 6:10. Once heaven pronounces judgement upon sinners, the earth has no choice but to rise up against them – Numbers 16:30. This is a known fact dating from the days of old – Job 20:27. It is the reason many believe they can appease the earth through ritual; blood sacrifices to elongate their days on earth and that the earth would eventually preserve their earthly wealth, but we have seen them perish in the end. The earth is the Lords, and it cannot disobey the instructions of heaven. We read in Genesis 3:18-19, that the earth was

commanded to execute the punishment of God upon Adam for his sinful act against the instruction of God. And in 2 Chronicles 7:14, we saw that God only heals a portion of the land inhabited by those whose sins have been forgiven. This is why we ought to ensure we are sinless. Sin brings pains and shame. It is the main reason people experience denials, because the earth obeys the order of heaven. While it is common reasoning to blame the government, it is also more common-sense to understand that the government cannot hold that which the Lord has apportioned to those who serve Him. This is why in the midst of hunger; the children of God are still having the peace and blessings of God. It is equally good to talk about the standard of living in developed nations, the truth is that the nationals are also not enjoying peace. The government cannot give peace except God rules a nation.

Faith confession: I know that the world is a temporary place. I am not going to wear myself chasing material wealth to the hurt of my soul. I will always keep my hands clean from iniquities.

Let us pray: My Lord, you reveal to save. I pray that I will be found worthy to merit your reward when you shall return in your glory. I pray that your mercy will keep sustaining me. Amen!

Meditation: Luke 21:25-28; Ephesians 1:3-12



Overcoming a Backsliding Spirit

*The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways:
and a good man shall be satisfied from himself. Prov. 14:14*



To backslide is to ignore the call of faith and destiny. The anchor verse above says that those who backslide champion their own course outside the will of God. Why do we backslide? One clear answer is the fact that we haven't recognise the need to surrender unto God and serve Him wholeheartedly. This is one fact that we get when we read through Hosea 11:7, "And my people are bent to backsliding from me: though they called them to the most High, none at all would exalt him." God has, time after time, draw us to Himself, but the evil in the heart of mankind is making it difficult for man to appreciate the purpose of God for humanity. Again, scripture says in Jeremiah 3:14, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you: and I will take you one of a city, and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion." Here, we can see the reason why God is interested in us. He wants to lead us in turn to mount Zion, the mount of praise. Is it hard to praise God without a sincere heart? Jesus says in John 4:23, "But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him." How can this be when many live a backsliding Christian life daily without really knowing it, as we sermonise a mix of Christian and worldly doctrine to attract more seekers of vain glory. Is it really difficult to serve Him above our human wants and needs? Can we truly offer Him our body as a living sacrifice? How can we overcome the

spirit of "turning away" from God? A quick answer is found in Jeremiah 3:15, "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." God leads to heal. Pastors should be patient to lead souls to Christ and not to our expensive cathedrals. He is raising pastors to do His work for us. It is important that we realise this fact – that God is interested in us, and He will use those who have encountered Him and have his spirit to lead us out of the dudgeon of spiritual suffering. Christ seekers should go after the truth in Christ and not after mouthy sermons filled with lies to entice their souls into hell. Joshua cared about the relationship of his household with God, that he was sure they will serve the Lord (Joshua 24:15). Today, there are many who are not sure they can serve God to the end.

Faith confession: Lord! I have no one else beside you. I know that you treasure my soul and that your desire is that I remain faithful all the days of my life in your service.

Let us pray: Lord! you remain my enduring hope in time of trouble. In your name have I build my trust. Let me stay till the end on this path of righteousness and continually do your will. Amen!

Meditation: Proverbs 1:32; Matthew 6:33; Acts 17:22-31; Rev. 3:3

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When Nothing Else Works

And a woman having an issue of blood twelve years, which had spent all her living upon physicians, neither could be healed of any: Luke 8:43



When nothing else works, God is in the situation. He is in your midst, waiting for you to stretch forth your hand and receive of the new wine of restoration. In the anchor verse, we can see that her healing came by taking a step of faith. We can also take learning from the vision of Ezekiel in Ezekiel 37:11, "...behold, they say, 'our bones are dried, and our hope is lost...'" God promised them in that vision of how He restores deadness to life – "...shall put my spirit in you, and ye shall live ..." (vs 14). This was what happened in the story of the woman with the issue of blood. The moment she touched the garment of Jesus, virtue was gone out of Him, "...Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me" – Luke 8:46. The virtue that went out of Christ is the power of God. When nothing else seems to work, don't be in a hurry to speak like the Israelites in Ezekiel 37:11. You have God as hope in front of you. All you need is to search for Him with your whole heart. Jeremiah 29:13 says, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart." This is where the wisdom of God come first among other things. If we have His wisdom in us, we will know what to do. Proverbs 8:17 says, "I love them that love me; and those that seek me early shall find me." Searching for God is not an easy task. We cannot find Him with human wisdom because He is a spirit. But, we can harbour His wisdom within us. All we

need is to search for all that pleases Him in the Bible. Love what He commands. Pray that He teaches you His ways early. It is one reason we are encouraged to seek the Lord early – Isa. 55:6; Ecc. 12:1. The only way out of every tribulation is turning to God, not human wisdom – Deut. 4:30. Before we blame the witches and evil altars in our villages for our woes, and start unending nights of prayers against our enemies, let our ways be right before God. The devil cannot hunt those who are converted and serving the Lord. If a brother and sister tell you there is no reward in serving the Lord, and prefer to try other means, tell him or her to be faithful till the end. It is the end that justifies the means. Be firm in your service and you will break forth into joy and singing. Your barns too will be bounteous – Prov. 3:10.

Faith confession: I am determined to follow your will for my life. I am encouraged to keep depending on your saving and healing arm. I have made up my mind to serve you unto reward.

Let us pray: Dear Lord! enable me to keep my focus and desire on you. Reveal yourself more and more to me as I study your word. Let your wisdom dwell richly in me daily and let me experience the calmness in the breath of your Holy Spirit. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 85:8-13; Acts 26:15-18

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God Can Defend the Oppressed

*But this is a people robbed and spoiled; they are all of them
snared in holes, and they are hid in prison houses:
they are for a prey, and none delivereth... Isaiah 42:22*



How can Christians defend the oppressed in their midst? Today, as in the days of old, the poor and needy cries to God for help. Sometimes, their cries in our midst can make many to question why Church leaders are not helping the poor. There are instances of many complaining that Pastors build schools that the poor cannot afford the tuition fees. Some pastors have equally asked if feeding the poor or attending to their needs is all that the kingdom of God is all about. If we take learning from the Bible, we will see that Scripture encourages that alms be given to the poor and a shelter be provided for the poor - Isa. 58:7. How did Jesus solve this problem? Did He give them shelter? Did He provide food for them? Is there any proof that He gave them clothing? Jesus rather reproved those in authority of governance, who oppresses the poor and take what rightly belongs to them for their own consumption and pleasure. If we bring this solution to our own modern context, it would mean that Christians are to ensure that the government does not misappropriate the commonwealth of the nation for their personal gains. Hence, if the government is reproved to do what is right, the poor will even have no need eyeing the wealth of pastors. Peter, indeed had a boat He used for fishing before He was called. What happened to the boat why He was with the Lord? Honestly, the boat could have been among those used to ferry the Lord. Today, we can see our preaching of the gospel across

difficult terrains as how the Lord was ferried across the sea of Galilee. Is it wrong then for a pastor to use airplane to preach the gospel? Where has pastors erred? It is when they tolerate corruption in government and become allies to the government who donate millions to them, while neglecting the plight of the poor, knowing that the commonwealth of the nation should be accessed by all. If a government is sensitive to the plight of the needy among us, and still support the work of the gospel, it is to the glory of God. But, when such a government neglect the basic infrastructures of life, such as hospitals and schools, and pastors rejoices with them - building expensive hospitals and schools that are beyond the reach of the poor like unrepentant politicians, then such pastors will definitely have answers to give to God. The God of the poor is not asleep. Depend on Him.

Faith confession: I am convinced that My God is awesome. He can move mountains out of the way for me to break forth into celebration. He keeps me in the valley to hide me from evil.

Let us pray: Dear Lord, you are still the God of the oppressed. Today, my sincere prayer is that you arise and deliver the oppressed, who serve you, from the shackles of the wicked. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 22:24-31; Isaiah 5:18-23

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Overcoming the Test of Faith

Blessed is the man that endureth temptation: for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him. James 1:12



When our faith is stretched by temptations, and we are able to overcome – we are counted among those who are able to receive the crown of life. What is this crown of life? We can get some insights into what apostle James is referring to here from Rev. 2:10, "...be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." It shows that the crown of life is an honour bestowed in heaven, before the throne of God on those who remained faithful in their walk with God till their dying day. This hope of receiving an eternal commendation from the throne of Grace in heaven is enough to make us steadfast in our service to the Lord, no matter the trials we pass through doing His bidding for our souls. Christians live a life of "watch." We are expected to keenly watch every situation of life and take a stand with the Lord, such that our actions will promote the righteousness of Christ. Hence, in 1 Corinthians 16:13, Apostle Paul says, "Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be courageous; be strong" (NIV). We must stand firm in faith. Our service in the vineyard, is a calling of 'many' and the choosing of 'few.' The competition is high, with one standard – the rule of heaven. Not as men pleasers – we can only attract His attention when we do not yield to the 'to and fro' tossing of life events. In Matthew 25:13, Jesus emphasized, "Watch therefore, for ye know neither the day nor the hour wherein the Son of man cometh." You see, His second coming will take us unawares. Some were firm, but gave in to corruption to make ends meet, and then their death came.

Others were faithful in their oath of chastity before the Lord, until they defiled themselves to pay school fees, and they couldn't have the time to repent as they died on their way back from the hotel. A sister said – "I entered into an oath of chastity until I was defiled by my male friend." How can you enter into a vow of chastity and keep male friends closely? Her dressing wasn't a reflection of chastity either. With laps exposed, and she want to remain chaste? You want to quit smoking and you are in the midst of smokers daily? You want to stop stealing and thieves are your best friends? One sinful act is all the devil is waiting for to throw dung of shame on our faces. Others can do it and might go away with it, but not so for anyone who is walking with the Lord. Our patience is put to test in our needs. Our faithfulness is tried when we triumph over oppression. Our discipleship is dignified when we overcome tribulations. This is how it works. Say no to the corruption of your soul and live for Christ.

Faith confession: I understand that I can only receive the crown of life when my walk with you exceed mere mouth wishes, but in the display of purity in my entire life.

Let us pray: Lord! Let the glory of your name keep encouraging me to serve you. Invade my entire being with the passion of your salvation and satisfy me early in my quest to know you more. Amen!

Meditation: Matthew 5:17-20;

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Focusing on Reality

*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today;
and for ever. Hebrews 13:8*



The moment you are born again, there is the tendency that your unbelieving friends and relatives will start to avoid you. I didn't realise this until recently. Though, they still pick your calls, they do so with the mindset that you are a stranger. It is even worst when you try to seek their assistance – their body language will tell you that you are never welcomed. Some may even seem as though they profess the same faith in Christ as you do, but they might see your Christianity as too rigid. Someone asked me some time ago, why my message of salvation was not flexible. My reply was that my Lord – who called me unto His glory is the same yesterday, today and forever, as indicated in the anchor verse above. As one who have been on the side of idolatry prior to receiving the salvation of the Lord, a comparison between idol worshippers and some believers will show the contrast that one notices in devotion and dedication. Whereas idol worshippers are seen rejoicing and proud of their service to their idols, many believers seem to be ashamed of their God. One can see idol worshippers rushing to meet up their times of devotion, but not so for most Christians. We are getting too used to our Lord – we must not take His leniency for granted and as His weakness to punish. In the book of Hebrews 13:9, the reason for us to be firm in our doctrine of the Kingdom is advocated, "Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein." The same goes with our

changing status in life. Once you are married, you need to have more of married friends who are faithful to their marriage calling, than continuously being in the company of spinsters and bachelors. This is how to avoid evil communications (1 Cor. 15:33). Your faith is your reality. It is a fact that cannot be denied by anyone who observe you closely. Therefore, let that reality represent Christ. I stand for Christ. I am an advocate of His mercy and passion. I profess His goodness everywhere I go. I am never ashamed of Him. The only way I can appreciate the salvation he earned for me, is to remain faithful to His bidding upon my soul. My reality is Jesus Christ – crucified on the cross for me. Paul says in Galatians 2:20 – "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Faith confession: Unto God belongs the glory and the honour, of all I am today and will become in future. The Lord has made me a promise of hope to many. I will forever be grateful to His name.

Let us pray: Lord! I am desirous of your will for my life. Keep me safe in the glory of your anointing. Define my path and purpose on earth, and encourage my soul to yearn for you always. Amen!

Meditation: Galatians 6:14-15; 1 Corinthians 2:6-9

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After Mercy, What Next?

*... according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of
regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Titus 3:5*



To be regenerated means to receive a new life. It means to be born-again. Until we are regenerated in thoughts and actions that represents the will of heaven, can we truly say we have received the mercy of God through our saviour Jesus Christ? Once we are regenerated, God renews the Holy Ghost in us. What can we deduce from this fact? It is for us to know that the Holy Ghost will stop linking us to God once we start appreciating and indulging in sinful acts. This shows that the infilling of the Holy Ghost is a matter of choice. We have to yearn towards Him. We have to approach the seat of mercy with all boldness and promising not to fall back into the mud of sin again. We must hate hypocrisy and evil thoughts. This is because living a life of hypocrisy is going farther away from the truth in Christ. A hypocrite is one who live a double life – one leg with Jesus (in church) and another in the world. Such fellows are often termed social Christians. They are always searching through the Bible to see how they can use science and modern knowledge to explain the truths in the Bible. They often find ways to differentiate the God of the Old Testament from the God of the New Testament. They are the, “it doesn't matter” group in the church. They argue that the Bible needed to be contextualize in modernity. All these arguments can lead to blasphemy, as we can even begin to believe

that Christ never existed, and that salvation is just a cooked-up doctrine to restrict mankind from enjoying life to its fullest. If we are truly regenerated – then, old things will pass away. Our peace in the Lord will become so revealed in our heart. We won't live as though we are unawares of our mission here on earth. We won't be living as if we have lost connection to the throne of Grace through Christ. A regenerated mind is a converted mind. Regeneration links our souls for eternal consecration and spiritual elevation. Be encouraged to desire the infilling of the Holy Ghost. Be open! Be willing!! Be filled!!! Our regeneration paves way for sanctification unto consecration to serve in the vineyard.

Faith confession: I am regenerated by His blood. I dwell in His glory. For, He brought me into His inner chamber with a banner of love over me and my household, to sup the wine of the new covenant with Him in His banquet.

Let us pray: Help me – Dear Lord! to remain in your love and mercy. Let me be united with your victory over death. Sustain my joy in the midst of adversity, so that I am able to remain dedicated to your bidding.

Meditation: John 7: 37-38;
Matthew 19:28-30

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Announced by God

Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. Hebrews 4:11



God derives joy in announcing us when we please Him. This was actually what happened to Job. God announced Jesus Christ severally before the people. Sometimes, you have deep revelations about how God is set to bless you or somebody in your dreams or visions. These dreams can only become manifest in the physical when we do God's will. For the purpose of illustration, I will want to recount what happened to a student who was writing his school certificate examination. On this day, he had finished the morning papers and had mathematics in the afternoon. After his launch, he decided to have a rest then he slept off. In his dream he saw himself writing the same exam that his colleagues were writing in the physical, and when he was about to submit his papers for assessment, he woke up only to discover he was in a dream. He jumped out of bed and ran down to the school, but the exam was over. Are we becoming overfed, that we sleep off neglecting what we ought to do that will enable the Lord to announce us before the angels? Then, we start complaining that God is not answering our prayers? In Deut. 28:3, we come across the manifestation of the favour of God upon anyone who obeys His commands: "Blessed shalt thou be in the city, and blessed shalt thou be in the field." It is what I will call – ultimate blessings. In the anchor verse above, the writer of the book of Hebrews cautioned that unbelief can deny

one from experiencing the favour of "rest." Further in Hebrews 4:13, we are informed of how God knows the thoughts of our hearts; hence He cannot be deceived by vain talks. We must labour to earn the blessings associated with the favour of God. Many will say we do not need to labour to earn the recognition of God. I did not only see this as a denial of truth but hypocrisy. As reflected in the anchor verse, God denied the erring Jews entrance into Canaan because they rebelled. Despite the Ten Commandments being "the ministration of death" as recounted by Paul in, 2 Cor. 3:7, God expected that every bit of it must be obeyed. Now we have Christ, we should count ourselves blessed to uphold the glory of God in the death of Christ for our sins. In appreciation, we must preach the gospel wherever we found ourselves. This is the command of the Lord – Mark 16:15.

Faith confession: I know God can announce me for heavenly and earthly favours. I understand that If I stand firm in obedience to His command to win souls into His kingdom, He will bless me.

Let us pray: Oh Lord! Severally, I have realised that you announce those who preach the good news wherever they go, to win souls into your courts. Help me to be a soul winner wherever I go. Amen!

Meditation: Hebrews 2:3-15; 1 Cor. 9:16-23

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Overcoming Work Pressure

*And the taskmasters hastened them, saying, Fulfil your works,
your daily tasks, as when there was straw. Exodus 5:13*



I have thought over the above scripture portion severally and tried to compare this with what is currently happening in society. The moment Pharaoh was approached to let the Israelites go, that was when he increased their pain. He made them to source for the materials they needed for the bricks they were making. Recently, we see organisations retrenching their staff, with different excuses and increasing the tasks of those remaining. There are instances of many doing jobs that were originally meant for three or more persons. In my studies in organisational psychology, I discovered that when people become demotivated to do a particular job because of work stress, they can experience burn-out. We might not see anything wrong with becoming over-pressured with work, the obvious truth is that there is no way one can still have a quality work-life balance with the family and a happy time to reflect on God. Once we are unable to give our families the emotional attention they deserved, are we still sure we have a family? Then, there is the concern of illnesses from stress, and emotional instability. Funnily enough, the owners of those organisations have refused to reduce their own profit margin, yet some claims to profess Christianity. I appeal to the conscience of business owners who over pressurise their staff, to be sympathetic towards them. Rome, they say, was not built in a day. You cannot make all the profits you intend in a day. If we are truly believers, let the consciousness of

Christ cry of mercy in our heart. Treat your staff with love. Let the job design be adequate for the official time. If you are a staff and under work pressure, you can pray for freedom. Excessive work pressure can reduce your life span, and you might not have time with your God in meditation. God did not create you to live a life of sorrow and shame. You must realise that the inheritance of Christians is being turned to strangers, who claims to be Christians, and they are not. Christianity is about tender mercies. Any boss that lacks this, though he holds the Bible, is not a Christian. I will encourage us to study Lamentations 5 :1-22 and realise that our labour of pain might not be ordinary. Yet, we can break loose from oppression in our workplaces, if we present this case before our God.

Faith confession: I declare my freedom from oppression and excessive work pressure today. I am aware that my God will surely visit anyone trying to enslave me to do more than my reward.

Let us pray: Lord, touch the heart of anyone overseeing your children wherever they work, that they be treated like humans. Even as you saved the Israelites from the terror of their task masters, so may you save your children and this country from tyrant leaders. Amen!

Meditation: Matthew 11:28-30; Lev 25:17, Isa 49:26, Jer 7:6

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Your Glorious Position in Christ

*Is Israel a servant? is he a home-born slave? Why is he spoiled?
The young lions roared upon him, and yelled, and they made his
land waste: his cities are burned without inhabitant -Jeremiah 2:14-15*



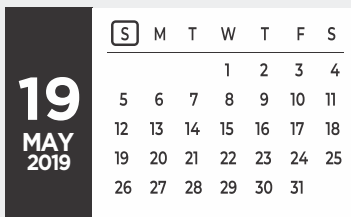
The voice of God thunders in the anchor verse above, of how the Israelites abandoned their call to holiness, and ended up being insulted and mocked. This is one portion of scripture that keeps me on my feet doing the bidding of the Lord. You see, from what we just read, the children of Israel were suffering without really knowing they were. In the opening verse in Jeremiah chapter 2, God instructed the prophet – “...Go and cry in the ears of Jerusalem...” Why should Jeremiah cry? God remembered how Israel walked with Him in purity in the past. Yet, the same people who had experienced the wonders of God were now imitating their idolatry neighbours. Earlier in day 7 of this month, we talked about how some Christians still live a low-life; a life of sin that does not glorify God. You see, this month of May is very important as a month to improve our devotion to God through Christ, because we just celebrated His resurrection. We must realise our glorious place in Christ, so that we do not walk back into bondage with our eyes wide open. We have been treated by unbelievers as empty vessels because we still act like them, hence the young lions roared upon us. Who are the young lions? They are the wealthy and uncircumcised in heart., who now treats us as slaves because we depend on them for our daily bread. We have mingled with them to the extent that

we now acquire worldly wisdom from them - glorifying the spirit of mammon in the house of God. And God is asking us in the midst of the multitudes of troubles that now visits us: “Hast thou not procured this unto thyself, in that thou hast forsaken the Lord thy God ...” - Jeremiah 2:17. Christ redemptive work will be complete if only we turn to God and do His commands. Many of us have used the substance of justification to yield to sin. Our glory in Christ is to enable us break loose from slavery of any form. The substance of faith is matured in the word of Christ we receive daily – Rom. 10:8-11.

Faith confession: I may have undermined my place in Christ and lived as though I have no God. But, today I realise myself and the glory set before me. I am now awakened to make amend.

Let us pray: Dear Lord! Help me to grow in the strength of your wisdom and in the cloud of your presence. Do not depart from me all the days of my life. Bring me into your bosom and let me experience your abundance. Bless me according to your loving kindness and be merciful unto me and my household – even to my generations unborn forever. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 28:1-2; Luke 12:22-32



In Purity Before God

*...the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.
But that the world may know that I love the Father. John 14:30*



Anytime I read of Jesus' boldness and confession of purity before the Father, I equally aspire to live a life of purity unto Him. As we can see above, Jesus had no sin in Him. He boldly declared – "the prince of this world hath nothing in me." In giving the reason why he refused to fall into the temptation of seduction, Joseph said in Genesis 39:9, "...how then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? King David also made a similar declaration in Psalms 17:3, "Thou hast proved mine heart; thou hast visited me in the night; thou hast tried me, and shalt find nothing; I am purposed that my mouth shall not transgress." How did David achieve his desire of purity before God? He was determined to avoid vain conversations. He prayed to use his mouth to glorify God and preach the gospel. As a reward for his purity before God, David demanded in Psalms 17:8, "Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wings." You can see that when we are determined to secure the protection and prosperity from the Lord, we will always be mindful of how we live our lives. We cannot expect God to protect us from evil, such as armed robbery and kidnapping, when we do the things that attract demons around us and deprive angels the access to our homes and our position at every material time. Jesus' statement in the anchor verse is very important to us His followers. It signifies that

if the devil has anything against us, it will be difficult for us to receive the help of the Father and His holy angels. Jesus says above that He lived a sinless life for the world to know that He love the Father. This equally mean that when we live a life that glorifies the prince of this world, we are declaring that we hate the Father before the world. The more I search and study scripture, the more I wonder where some preachers got their doctrine of God accepting people without a passage from sin unto repentance in their lives. I am convinced more and more that Christians are not receiving the help of God, because of their outward support for sin through the life they live, including the doctrine of "wealth at all cost," immorality and seduction.

Faith confession: I might not have received answers to my prayers because I regard iniquity in my heart. God loves a pure heart and will consider the supplications of those with a contrite spirit.

Let us pray: Set my heart aright with you oh God. Instruct me early to know the aspect of my life that does not glorify you. Reveal the gory of Christ in me though the gospel that I preach daily. When I lift up my voice towards your throne, before your mercy seat, please harken to my cry. Amen!

Meditation: Psa. 66:18-20; Psalms 15:1-5

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The Demands of Steadfastness

By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 1 Corinthians 15:2



One Sunday, I asked a believer coming from service of her experience in church and her response was, “church was fun today.” I wondered at her statement, and what aspect of the service in where she worshipped was fun? The anchor verse says that we are saved by the word of God we keep in memory, because this is what builds our faith. If the sister actually kept the word of God in her memory, I would have expected to hear a statement of remorse from her, like – “I am determined to put on a new leaf in my attitude towards the gospel.” When we overlook the need to remain steadfast in our service to God, we end up treating the words of change we hear from the Bible with disdain and hilarious disregard. Then, the worship and praise session become funny. The preacher is equally funny, and his sermon a total carcase of fun. The welcoming of first-time worshippers is also clouded in fun, and we introduce them to a funny doctrine of irresponsibleness. When everything becomes fun in our solemn convocation before the Lord, then His crucifixion becomes mere fun to fool the world. Then, comedians can now make fun of the gospel and Christ. Hmmm! We will then treat the entire purpose of salvation as fun. Can we see how immorality and seduction crept into the church? Today, no one cares about the implications of immoral dressings in church – because the church is seen as a place of fun. God was angry in Ezekiel 22:8, when he

said – “Thou hast despised my holy things...” I can see why Jesus cautioned in Matthew 7:6, “Give not that which is holy unto the dogs....” We must be cautioned that our relationship with God is under threat when we fail to tell those coming to seek “fun” in the church that the church is a house of God, and that the praise, worship and sermons should be revered with the utmost respect., because they represent the holy things of the Lord in that service. We must encourage them that when they come into the house of God, as we invite them for the first time, that they must be very attentive, because they need to keep the scripture passages that were mentioned and explained during the service to memory. King David was glad to be in the house of the Lord – Psa. 122:1, because he has respect for God.

Faith confession: Whenever I am in God's presence, it is a privilege that I must treat with utmost regard. God meets with us during worship, praise and the holy sermons we hear.

Let us pray: Lord! help me to respect all that concerns you – all your ordinances in your house of worship. Let me not overlook any aspect of a service set in your name. Help me to keep in memory all I hear, and the scripture passages that I read during my time in your house. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 25:8-14; Psalms 19:9-11; Acts 10:34-44

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God is Good

*Truly God is good to Israel, even to
such as are of a clean heart. Psalms 73:1*



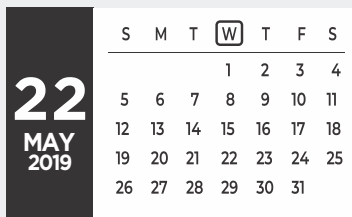
Our God is good – always and always. There are incontestable facts that supports the above assertion. You see, the goodness of God is displayed in His ability to provide that which we need before we ask – Eph. 3:20. In Psalms 84:11, we come across a vivid exploration of why God is good - “For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” As a sun, He gives us warmth and comfort from the cold of shame and crown our day with vigour to succeed. And, as a shield, He protects us from the fiery darts of the evil one. To crown it all, He gives grace and glory. Jesus affirmed this in John 14:23, “...If a man loves me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” What does the above statement mean? Have you imagined God the Father, His Son and Holy Spirit, dwelling among us? Is this not what Jesus meant when He said the kingdom of God is within us? – Luke 17:21. The reason why He want to live among us is to give us His grace and glory, by Himself. Can God make His abode with us and armed robbers will attack us? We are demanded to keep every Word that the Lord has spoken, and His grace and Glory will be given to us. As indicated in the anchor verse above, God is Good, not only to Israel, but to anyone having a clean heart. Those who have clean hearts and do not harbour hatred against their neighbours.

They are kind, merciful and forgives those who trespasses against them, for the sake of God. Have you spent anything to champion the course of the gospel and feel you have lost it all? I always take learning from 2 Chron. 25:9, “...The Lord is able to give thee much more than this.” I am encouraged daily to keep publishing the gospel, because the Lord is Good at all times – a trial will definitely convince anyone (Psa. 34:8). Keep believing! Keep faith!! God does not owe anyone. If you have contributed towards His work, He has also rewarded you – 2 Cor. 9:8-11. Count your blessings one by one – and it will surprise you what the Lord has done. Reminding Him that you have paid your tithe or contributed an offering to support His work is needless. He is El-Roi, for He sees. He provides for us “according to the power that worketh in us” Eph. 3:20.

Faith confession: Lord - generations after generations have looked up to you in their times of distress for rescue and you never forsake them. I am a testimony of your ever presence love in my life.

Let us pray: Lord! I pray for your grace and glory. Let not unbelievers mock and scorn at me. Do not withhold your goodness and favour from me as I continually serve you wholeheartedly. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 84:1-12; Exodus 34: 1-14



The All Sufficient God

But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:19



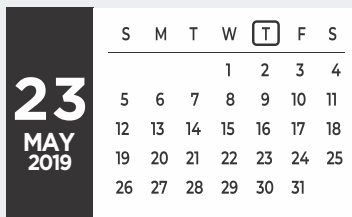
The anchor verse is one portion that is often quoted by Christians. If we take a closer look at the verse cited, we will notice that Saint Paul referred to the supply of need, not wants. Our needs refer to anything that can hinder us from living a meaningful life. This implies, that whatever God was going to provide, is specifically a lack that is already hindering our lives. When we are in lack, unbelievers are going to question us “Where is thy God?” This was the main reason David said he went into the house of God to seek His help – Psalms 42. However, it is important to note here that God will bless the works of our hands and give us favour in the sight of men. You don’t ask for your need to be met when you are not willing to do something. Hear what Paul said in 1 Thessalonians 4:11-12, “And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; That ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.” This is also what Paul commanded in, 2 Thess. 3:10, “...if any would not work, neither should he eat.” The supplies in the church are for those who labour for the gospel as commanded by the Lord – 1 Cor. 9:14, “...the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel.” If the church leadership decide to assist the needy who do not stand by the word of God but are seen perambulating from one church gathering to the other, it is only to demonstrate the love in Christ and not that it is a burden that they must fulfil. People should be encouraged to do something with their hands,

except they are truly incapacitated – either blind, without limbs, or badly deformed. If not, there is no excuse for staying all night praying for manna to fall from heaven, while gossiping from one home to the other. In the anchor verse, Paul prayed for those who provided gifts for him as he laboured for Christ, “I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, wellpleasing to God” Philippians 4:18. As long as he received it with joy – the items became a sacrifice that was well pleasing to God. God can supply our need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. What does this mean? You see, it means that by Paul’s prayer, those who made the provisions for his upkeep will truly have their need supplied by God, because through their supplies to Paul, the gospel of Christ did not suffer.

Faith confession: I understand that to succeed, I must not be cantankerous, and must have my own work or business, and that I should work with my own hands, and support the work of God.

Let us pray: Lord! help me to support the propagation of your gospel and those bearing the burden of your gospel; that I may continuously have the supply of my need from you. Amen!

Meditation: Psalms 71:21-24; Zechariah 8:12; Luke 6:38; Exo. 23:25-26



Living in the Miraculous

And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy; which shall be to all people. Luke 2:10



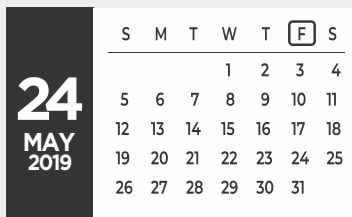
We have stories of how God intervened in situations that demanded solutions beyond physical boundaries; when it is certain that no physical intervention can save the situation. Two glaring examples are the creation stories in Genesis 1, and the rescue of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt. If we look into the sky, into the water we drink, to the air we breathe, to the creations of God we see around us – all we can imagine is that the hand of God has made all. This is the more reason why we must seek Him early, so that when we need His assistance – He will be a prayer call away. We cannot understand the elements of the miraculous or what happens in a miraculous setting until we understand every verse in 2 Samuel 22:7-19. David referred to the Temple of God, from where the prayer was made, and further visualised how God answered from verse 8 through 16. He concluded the scenes of his miraculous deliverance thus – “He sent from above, he took me; he drew me out of many waters; He delivered me from my strong enemy, and from them that hated me: for they were too strong for me. They prevented me in the day of my calamity; but the Lord was my stay.” I love the last statement of confidence – “the Lord was my stay.” Are you being intimidated by the forces of the enemy? It is time we understand that a single call for help for those who fear God, unleashes terror into the camp of the evil one. Why did God delivered David as recounted above? See what he has

to say – “...he delivered me, because he delighted in me. The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness...” 2 Sam. 22:20-21. From verses 8 through 16, God used earthquake, rain storm, thunder and lightning, dark cloud, wind, etc., to fight a battle of freedom for David. Have you noticed these combinations of events before? What is coming to your mind now? Don't you think that when these occur, that God is fighting your spiritual battles? Haven't you heard of how evil people die on their bed while asleep after a heavy rain fall accompanied by thunder? You see, we live in the midst of the miraculous if only we care to know. David prayed in a temple where God heard him. If you can pray in an altar where God can hear you, the rest is history. In the end, God made David prosperous by bringing him forth into a large place – 2 Sam. 22:20a.

Faith confession: Whenever God shows up, He uses His creations to set a miraculous atmosphere in place to cause deliverance, healing and to establish the prosperity of His servants.

Let us pray: Oh Lord! Send down deliverance from above and let the cloud of your presence, and the thundering of your triumph over evil, establish your purpose in my life. Amen!

Meditation: Psalm 89:20-37; Luke 9:34-35; Psalms 34:7-8; Mark 11:20-26



A Date with Destiny

*And the Lord said unto Moses, See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh:
and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet. Exodus 7:1*



On that fateful day, Moses was on his usual routine of caring for the flocks of his in-law. He decided to take them to an uncommon pasture to give the flocks a better treat. We know the place was full of greener pasture, because we are told the bush was not consumed (Exo. 3:2). He never knew he was at the foot of the mountain of God – even Horeb (Exo. 3:1). There, a mystery happened, God revealed himself as a consuming fire – Hebrews 12:29, who will not hurt even the innocent bush by consuming it. This mystery was to take Moses through memory lanes to understand the powerlessness of Pharaoh before His presence. God called out to Moses. He told Moses, He was a faithful God who values the terms of the covenant He entered with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and ready to deliver the Jews from the land of Egypt. Moses had been on the “wanted” list for killing an Egyptian. Hmmm – to Moses, this was death sentence in disguise. God knew his fears! Moses was encouraged that with His presence, the rod in his hand will become an arm of warfare. Before then, He revealed His sacred name to Moses – even the name that Abraham was not privileged to hear. You see, there is no end to God’s revelation. He reveals in line with the demand of the situation – Deut. 29:29. To convince Moses, God turned his rod to something Moses was familiar with while he was in Egypt; the serpent, which was the Egyptian symbol of divine authority – Exo. 4:3. Implying, that as Moses held the serpent

by the tail so shall he have control over Pharaoh – Exo. 4:4. By this, Moses became a god to Pharaoh as seen in the anchor verse. This is destiny at work as Moses reclaimed the original purpose of why God brought him into the Egyptian palace in the first place as a child. The rest of what happened as heaven cast the scene of victory on the side of the Israelites, by the pillar of fire in the night and the pillar of cloud in the day, are an obvious testimony of what the Lord can do to rescue His own. Today, you are meeting with destiny. Now, pray that God give you the control of your enemy into your hand, the way He gave the control of Egypt into the hand of Moses through his rod. The secret to reclaiming your destiny is with God – meet with Him now.

Faith confession: I speak grace - I sing victory. My heart is ready to take over the authority I left in the hand of the devil. Victory is mine as the power of the Lord rests in my hand.

Let us pray: Oh Lord! I pray for your deeper revelation concerning my destiny and all that I have lost. May I not be treated as a valueless commoner anymore. Let your power and authority in me make the difference between my yesterday and my today – going forward. Amen!

Meditation: 2 Timothy 2:20-21; Psalms 119:6-15, 117

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Not Too Young to Break Forth

...I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one. 1 John 2:14



Sometimes when I hear people give excuses for the young ones, that their youthful exuberance is the reason they find it difficult to serve God in sanctity, I wonder if God too will reason as such. Some pastors and preachers of the gospel have categorised them as those who should be condoled in their sinful lusts in the choir, because as it seems, they cannot do without sin. These excuses have no basis in scripture. Repentance is repentance. The same way God does not condole sin in adults, so also, He does not condole sin among the young. In the anchor verse above, Apostle John was so certain that the young men were strong in their service to the Lord, to the extent that the word of God abides in them – meaning they have become fruitful vines unto the Lord. The most interesting part of his letter was a testimony that these young men were able to overcome the temptation to sin from the devil. Did you read that? Our young men should hold fast in the Lord. The same temptations that existed now was there when Jesus grew strong in the spirit. In scripture, we read of a fig tree that the Lord cursed, and it withered, because though it was full of green leaves, yet there was no fruit on it. Yes! it wasn't the time for fig trees to bear fruits, but the tree has been blessed with greener leaves early to break forth. If God blesses the young with the gospel early, why can't they start to live a responsible life early too? We receive the kingdom through the knowledge of God and His creation, else we won't be able to find it. Whenever there is a descent of the knowledge of God through Christ

by the Holy Spirit, it is only on those who are worthy, and the vessels that are ready to be filled. This is the more reason we should encourage the young to desire to be saved, and to wish for the goodies that comes with being saved. The drive to live a life of affluence is affecting the young and they end up as adults without the sound knowledge of God. We read in Jeremiah 1:7, how the Lord replied Jeremiah when he tried to excuse himself from the call of God that he was a child, "But the Lord said unto me, Say not, I am a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee...." How can the young among us overcome the temptation to sin? Saint Paul cautioned Timothy thus, "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life..." – 2 Tim. 2:4. The timing is now. Joseph served God wholeheartedly and overcame the temptation of seduction. Daniel overcame the temptation to eat the delicacies of the rich king Nebuchadnezzar.

Faith confession: I understand that our service of worship and living a life of sanctity before God is not dependent on age. The old and young are needed by the same God to be holy and righteous.

Let us pray: Lord, help our young ones to desire you early. You know the battles of societal corruption that they do face, but today they are presented before you to behold your face. Amen!

Meditation: Eccl. 12:1-2; Psalms 71:5, 17-24

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The Glory of the Child 1

For thou hast possessed my reins: thou hast covered me in my mother's womb. Psalms 139:13



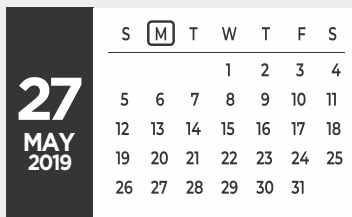
Children are given a measure of glory from the womb. This is why in Psa. 139:14, David says he is fearfully and wonderfully made. We also come the understanding that children are formed by God in the womb from the conversation of God with Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee..." Jer. 1:5. We can see the glory of the child coming from being sanctified from the womb. This is how it is with every child especially, when the parents are faithful in their service to God. We see this also in the birth of John the Baptist and Samson. The angels of the Lord take charge over every child dedicated to God. This was why Jesus cautioned, "Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven" Matthew 18:10. Why angels? They are the messengers of God, who ensures that our days on earth are fulfilled in the purpose of our birth. But, when children are not guided properly early on the path of God, they struggle through life. Personally, I subscribe to angelic ministry as they equally ministered to Jesus (Matt. 4:11; Luke 22:43), just as I also subscribe to the ministry of the Holy Ghost, the comforter of everyone who has received salvation through Christ. It is important at this point for us to know that the reason angels can depart from children as they grow,

is indulgence in sinful acts. As Saint Paul explained in Romans 3:23, "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Though, children are born sinless, they inherit sin when they begin to interact with the sinful environments they grow in. Hence, David says in Psalm 58:3 – "The wicked are estranged from the womb: they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies." It would be out of place to believe that some children are evil from the womb in the Christian context (Psa. 127:3), when the parents are already justified by the blood of the Lamb of God – Rom. 5:8. However, such estrangement mentioned above reflects poor parental upbringing and societal corruption. We can benefit from the early glory of God upon children if we dedicate them and keep nurturing them in the fear of the Lord.

Faith confession: Children are given by God so that they will grow to love and serve Him. I am a child of God, I am willing to lead my children in the ways of the Lord.

Let us pray: Dear Lord, guide me to lead my children in the path you have designed for them. Reveal to me who each child is in your purpose and the reason you sent them to earth. Amen!

Meditation: Isaiah 44:3-4



The Glory of the Child 2

*And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him,
They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have
I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. John 2:3-4*

We discussed in our last devotional topic that children can be misled to toe the path of sin, thereby corrupting their God-given glory. In the anchor verse above, we see how the mother of our Lord, Mary, made Jesus to perform the miracle of changing water into wine against the will of the Lord. I have always celebrated this first miracle, as the manifestation of the power of God among men. But, when I studied the verse deeply and meditated upon it, I came to realise that the mother was acting against His will. It was even more painful that the first miracle was to satisfy the glutton of people who were eager to become drunk. Though, Jesus spoke out that His time was not yet at hand – the time to make men experience the power of God, yet He did it to please His mother and to save the celebrants from shame. To understand that Jesus wasn't pleased with the way His mother was acting, we can see how He rebuffed the woman who told Him that His mother and brethren needed Him, in Luke 8:21, "And he answered and said unto them, My mother and my brethren are these which hear the word of God, and do it." If we bring it to the context under discussion, we will begin to discover that many children are made to do things against the wish of God in their lives by their parents. Most importantly, is how parents encourage their children into child labour to fend for their family. Daughters are sent into early marriages to settle debts or sent into the

streets to sell, and some have been raped by unsuspecting rapists. Some are equally sent into early labour as house helps in homes of the wealthy. Some of them have also been molested and seduced into early sexual life. Most frightening now is how children are **being** sold right from their birth day with full consent of their parents. Today, there is so much sin against innocent children. If you are a parent reading this, please ensure to guide your children in the path of the Lord and help them to start having a good knowledge of the gospel by encouraging them to study the Bible. If you are a child reading this, please know that God have a place in your life, and that you must yield to serve Him early so that your angel will keep praying for you before the Lord in heaven. This way, your life will be filled with grace and glory.

Faith confession: I understand that children will not struggle to live a profitable and meaningful life, when they recognise and establish their place in the Lord early.

Let us pray: Lord – it is your desire that children are brought to you early in their lives. Help restore children who have missed the path of life, to turn to you for direction. Amen!

Meditation: Judges 13:1-14; Job 39:13-17

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Letting our works speak in Christ

But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. Gal. 6:4



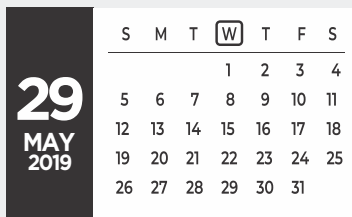
Have you ever supported the work of Christ? Have you done any work of faith that is worthy of reckoning? I learnt from Nehemiah, of how he always prayed that God should remember him for the good works he was doing- Neh. 13:14, 22, 31. There is joy in recounting the work we have done for the sake of the gospel. In 1 Corinthians 3:11-13, Saint Paul encouraged us to build upon the foundation laid by Christ, when he said – “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest...” Our labour in the vineyard is not in vain. Here is how Paul encouraged the church in Corinth – “Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord” 1 Corinthians 15:58. Truly, the Lord will reward us bountifully if we continue our service duly without grumbling. The anchor verse says that we will become fulfilled when we win souls into the kingdom of the Lord – a kingdom that is founded on righteousness and holiness. Rather than expecting praises from men of how much our work and labour is worth in their eyes, we should pray like Nehemiah, who prayed thus – “Remember me, O my God, concerning this also, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy” Neh.

13:22. No man can reward us appropriately as God will do. I always try to earn the good remark of the Lord, and severally He has done so. This is how I get my motivation to keep serving. Saint Paul got the recommendation of the Lord in Acts 23:11, “Be of good cheer, Paul: for as thou hast testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome.” The urgency of the work of the gospel is paramount now. Jesus says – “I must work the works of him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work” - John 9:4. Are you willing to win one soul a day? Can you take a bold walk to talk to someone about Jesus Christ today? Are you afraid that someone will scorn at you and not give you a listening ear? Be encouraged to preach the gospel. Likewise, let your life encourage unbelievers to want to listen to your preaching and teaching.

Faith confession: I am encouraged to teach and preach the gospel to unbelievers, and to strengthen my fellow brethren in Christ, with the words of Hope found in the Bible.

Let us pray: Lord! As I continue this journey of winning souls that will abide in your church, kindly regard my humble situation and reward me with your everlasting grace and glory. Amen!

Meditation: 1 Peter 5:1-11; 2 Timothy 4:1-8



Leading a Nation to Christ

When the righteous are in authority, the people rejoice: but when the wicked beareth rule, the people mourn. Proverbs 29:2



A prosperous nation is made up of the personalities mentioned in Isaiah 3:2-3, "The mighty man, and the man of war, the judge, and the prophet, and the prudent, and the ancient, The captain of fifty, and the honourable man, and the counsellor, and the cunning artificer, and the eloquent orator." They must have a thorough and sound formal education that qualifies them to be able to handle the duties of territorial guide, infrastructural development and the rule of law. Hence, they must be guided by the mind and wisdom of God. The word of the Lord in Matthew 28:19-20 says, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you..." By this, Christians are already under oath to ensure that the governance of every nation is carried out in accordance with the rule and statutes of God. This was why Moses has to build according to a revealed pattern as he led the nation of Israel out of want into provision. Implying, any government willing to lead a nation out of want to abundance must toe the line of building according to a pattern God reveals and takes responsibility for. Now, what makes a nation? A quick answer is that, a nation is made up of people, culture, and beliefs, and bounded in a territory. As seen from Matthew 28:19-20, the Lord is interested in making disciples in every nation so as to take the nations back to God – such that the people are guided with the culture and belief of

the kingdom of God. Now, if we meditate on the anchor verse, one question that comes to mind is, how can the righteous rule if believers fail to lend a voice to governance. In ancient Israel, the government was not separated from the state religion. However, this is no more the case today, except in some Asian nations where Hinduism is practiced. Christianity, as it is, have no nation where it is the sole religion. Despite this, in a nation like Nigeria, we have had instances where the presidents were Christians. The concern is, if they truly ruled with the righteousness and fear of God. This means that Christians do have access to governance, and the more reason why our younger generations should be taught and trained on how to rule a nation with the fear of God, early. This way, we will begin to have God-loving and God-fearing leaders in no distant time. It is time to have all hands-on-deck, if we must have a nation that we can lead to Christ.

Faith confession: I am encouraged to learn how to lead successfully with the fear of God. I believe that someday, I will be in government in this nation and sincerely lead many to God.

Let us pray: Lord, teach me how to lead with the fear of God, and how to succeed as a leader. Give me the wisdom to lead others in the path that will bring this nation to your glory. Amen!

Meditation: Judges 8:23; Mark 10:42-45; 2 Samuel 23:3-4

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The Receipt of Life

Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. Ephesians 4:13



We receive life through faith in God and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. These two must go hand in hand. The knowledge in us must bring us nearer to the Kingdom of God. Herein, we know if the knowledge we have is of Christ or not. Any knowledge that will deaden the light of God in us, equally affect our faith in Him negatively. This is because the knowledge of God is tightly knitted with our profession of faith in Him. Saint Paul made an assertion in 2 Timothy 3:12, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." While should we suffer persecution when we are serving God through Christ? This is because we need to mature in the knowledge of Christ, to mature our faith in God. Now, to mature in the knowledge of Christ will make us to refrain ourselves from the kind of life that is commonplace. We will no longer be deceived by the wisdom of man, and the enticing words of evil men and seducers who preaches the gospel for self-gain, and not for the revelation of Christ in the heart of men. Further in 2 Timothy 3:15, Saint Paul explained how one can become wise to overcome doctrinal deceit – "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." It takes great spirit of attentiveness to study the word of God. I encourage myself daily to receive the revelation of Christ as I study the scripture. Many have studied theology in Bible colleges yet have not come to the fullness of the revelation of Christ, hence they become

those who deceive those that trust and follow them. The study of theology is a fruitless adventure if the purpose is not to receive life through the full revelation of Christ, as a means to sustain life through faith in God. We pray to know Christ more. We worship to draw nearer to God through Christ. We study the scriptures to receive the approval of God as one who is licensed from heaven to teach the holy scriptures with truth and conscience by revelations and spiritual confirmations. This is the ultimate gain one can receive from the study of the Bible. This is why Saint Paul expressed his joy when the opportunity came for him to receive the revelation of Christ, in Galatians 1:15-16. By Christ, the entire purpose of God is revealed in His creation. This is why Christ must live in our hearts to give us life, and the dominion we lost through the sin of Adam over God's creation will be restored in us.

Faith confession: As I have read in this devotional topic, I can only receive life through the word I read and hear if they are from the holy scriptures of God and not from man-made doctrines.

Let us pray: Dear God, I pray that Christ be totally revealed in my heart, so that I will begin to live to please you through the Holy Ghost. Let me receive life everlasting by this knowledge. Amen!

Meditation: John 1:1-5; John 17:3; Galatians 2:20-21

<div>31</div> <div>MAY</div> <div>2019</div>	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
				1	2	3	4
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
	26	27	28	29	30	31	

Setting Our Hearts in Heaven

*Know therefore this day; and consider it in thine heart,
that the Lord he is God in heaven above, and
upon the earth beneath: there is none else. Deuteronomy 4:39*



As we study the last devotional topic in this Month of May, one message has been very obvious throughout our studies this month, and that is, how we can set our hearts towards the things that glorifies and expresses His holiness and righteousness in our midst. Therefore, let us begin to imagine the beauty that surround heaven. Let us pulse over the mansion that awaits us in heaven, and the welcoming by angels; and the excursions into the throne of the Lord. We desire heaven because it is the final dwelling place for the faithful servants of God. Personally, I have had revelations of heaven. It is a beauty to behold. If you have gazed at the sky in the night to see the dazzling lights of the stars, and if you have seen the sea and the wonderful waves and creatures of God it harbours, and you have looked around your environment and see the beautiful faces of your neighbours, and have also seen the magnificent buildings built by the hand of man, it won't be out of place to also imagine the beauty of heaven. If heaven was not a place that is far glorious than the earth, Lucifer, who was in charge of the mountains of worship and praise all around the world, would not have shown interest in ascending to heaven, as expressed in Isaiah 14:13-14, "For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the

mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High." The continual renewed interest in scientist's exploration of outer space is enough to show that mankind is tired of living on earth – with all the troubles of war and environmental pollution and disasters. Heaven is our final home. I encourage you to think about heaven and all the splendour that you will receive and live in when you make it to the throne of God. See you in the month of June. Till then, don't forget that serving God through Christ is the only means to living a life of victory. Shalom!

Faith confession: I am encouraged to press on towards the mark of glory. The more I study the word, the more I am getting fulfilled in all that I do. Thank you, Jesus. I am grateful to you.

Let us pray: Lord – I thank you for enabling me to see the end of this month of May 2019. I am grateful for all I have learnt from your word. I am focused now to teach and preach your word. Help my heart to desire you more daily and to keep seeking your divine wisdom. Amen!

Meditation: Eccl. 5:10-12; Prov. 24:28-29; Matt. 6:24-34

NOTE

[illegible]

Covenant Confession

If you are not born again, you may have studied this devotional as literary material and will not receive the spirit therein. You can make a decision to correct that now by saying this covenant confession:

Lord Jesus, I know now that you died for my sins. I believe and confess you as my Lord and Saviour. Please come into my life and dwell inside me.

If you just said this confession, you should locate a spirit-filled church to join in fellowship with them – let the pastor know you just gave your life to Christ and you will be directed on what to do next. Salvation is a personal race and you must be serious with it.

You can also call us through the numbers below:

+2348076190064; +234-8086737791.

Or send the author an email: umonthoja@yahoo.com

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WEDNESDAY
5:30PM

SUNDAY
8:30AM

SUNDAY SCHOOL
7:30AM

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- A total transformation in the way you Think and Act
 - Understanding the basics of the Christian life
 - How to Exist as sons of God
 - How to Manifest the true Nature of God
 - Total Freedom from satanic maneuvers
 - How to make Heaven

About the Author

Pastor Oghenethoja Umuteme encountered God the day he was baptised at St Stephen's Anglican Church, Owhelegbo Delta State, when he received a warm feeling in his heart as he confessed the Lord Jesus as His lord and personal saviour. His birth was surrounded with mysteries – he was born to a mother who had been barren for eight years. There was hardly anything he said that did not come to pass as he was growing. In 1994 he had a dream in which he received an orange which contained a bible with a red cover. Events continued dramatically until he started hearing voices telling him to go for rescue, as many souls were heading for destruction. Then it became clear to him that he was being called to carry out the task of restoring mankind back to Jesus.

In January 2006, he heard a voice telling him to read Isaiah 42. On reading to verse 6, he felt a deep force within him and started trembling and a voice said - 'I have called you.' As he read further



he was getting immersed in the spirit of God and when he read verse 22, the voice said, 'this is your task.' Then on the 13th of October 2008, he heard a voice while driving: 'Service starts in your house on Sunday.' Events happened that were beyond his understanding and on Sunday 19th October 2008, the first public worship service came to pass.

He is trained at Rivers State University, Nigeria; Robert Gordon University, UK; UNICAF University, Cyprus; Nations University, USA; and TGSAT, India; leading to academic degree certificates in engineering, organisational psychology, divinity and theology. He has over 11 years' work experience as an engineer, growing to the position of Engineering Design Lead in the oil and gas industry, and equally has a rich curriculum vitae that covers trainings and experiences in other works of life, such as human resources management, marketing management, legal studies, alternative dispute resolution, etc. Pastor Oghenethoja Umuteme is married to Pastor(Mrs.) Umuteme Adokiye Obele, who supports him in the call of God upon his life, and their marriage is blessed with children.